

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

Crim. Action No.: 1:21-CR-62
(Judge Kleeh)

THOMAS REED RATLIFF,

Defendant.

ORDER ADOPTING MAGISTRATE JUDGE'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING PLEA OF GUILTY IN FELONY CASE [ECF NO. 18],
ACCEPTING GUILTY PLEA, AND SCHEDULING SENTENCING HEARING

On January 6, 2022, the Defendant, Thomas Reed Ratliff ("Ratliff"), appeared before United States Magistrate Judge Michael J. Aloï and moved for permission to enter a plea of **GUILTY**, pursuant to a binding plea agreement, to Count One of the Information, charging him with Possession of Child Pornography, in violation of Title 18, U.S.C. § 2252A(a)(5)(B) and 2252(A)(b)(2). Ratliff stated that he understood that the magistrate judge is not a United States District Judge, and Ratliff consented to pleading before the magistrate judge. This Court referred Ratliff's plea of guilty to the magistrate judge for the purpose of administering the allocution, pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11, making a finding as to whether the plea was knowingly and voluntarily entered, and recommending to this Court whether the plea should be accepted.

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Based upon Ratliff's statements during the plea hearing, and the Government's proffer establishing that an independent factual basis for the plea existed, the magistrate judge found that Ratliff was competent to enter a plea, that the plea was freely and voluntarily given, that Ratliff was aware of the nature of the charges against him and the consequences of his plea, and that a factual basis existed for the tendered plea. The magistrate judge issued a *Report and Recommendation Concerning Plea of Guilty in Felony Case* ("R&R") [ECF No. 18] finding a factual basis for the plea and recommending that this Court accept Ratliff's plea of guilty to Count One of the Information.

The magistrate judge **released** Defendant on the terms of the Order Setting Conditions of Release. [ECF No. 17].

The magistrate judge also directed the parties to file any written objections to the R&R within fourteen (14) days after service of the R&R. He further advised that failure to file objections would result in a waiver of the right to appeal from a judgment of this Court based on the R&R. Neither Ratliff nor the Government filed objections to the R&R.

Accordingly, this Court **ADOPTS** the magistrate judge's R&R [ECF No. 18], provisionally **ACCEPTS** Ratliff's guilty plea, and

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ADJUDGES him **GUILTY** of the crime charged in Count One of the Information.

Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(c)(3) and U.S.S.G. § 6B1.1(c), the Court **DEFERS** acceptance of the proposed binding plea agreement until it has received and reviewed the presentence investigation report prepared in this matter.

Pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 6A1 et seq., the Court **ORDERS** the following:

1. The Probation Officer shall undertake a presentence investigation of Ratliff, and prepare a presentence investigation report for the Court;

2. The Government and Ratliff shall each provide their narrative descriptions of the offense to the Probation Officer by **February 7, 2022**;

3. The presentence investigation report shall be disclosed to Ratliff, his counsel, and the Government on or before **March 25, 2022**; however, the Probation Officer shall not disclose any sentencing recommendations made pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 32(e)(3);

4. Counsel may file written objections to the presentence investigation report on or before **April 8, 2022**;

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5. The Office of Probation shall submit the presentence investigation report with addendum to the Court on or before **April 22, 2022**; and

6. Counsel may file any written sentencing memorandum or statements and motions for departure from the Sentencing Guidelines, including the factual basis for the same, on or before **May 11, 2022**.

The Court further **ORDERS** that prior to sentencing, counsel for Defendant shall review with him the revised Standard Probation and Supervised Release Conditions adopted by this Court on November 29, 2016, pursuant to the standing order entered by Chief Judge Groh, In Re: Revised Standard Probation and Supervised Release Conditions, 3:16-MC-56.

The Court will conduct the **Sentencing Hearing** for Ratliff on **June 1, 2022**, at **10:00 a.m.**, at the **Clarksburg, West Virginia**, point of holding court. If counsel anticipates having multiple witnesses or an otherwise lengthy sentencing hearing, please notify the Judge's chamber staff so that an adequate amount of time can be scheduled.

It is so **ORDERED**.

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The Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this Order to
counsel of record and all appropriate agencies.

DATED: January 31, 2022

/s/ Thomas S. Kleeh

THOMAS S. KLEEH

UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE